



Blueprint 20-20

California State Fire Service Training and Education Strategic Plan 2006

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For the California Office of the State Fire Marshal

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

October 2006



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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

When the fire service training system transferred in 1974, from the Department of Education to the State Fire Marshal's Office, the system was provided a fraction of the training funds needed to operate at the same level of service. The training system was intended to be self-funded and self-perpetuating. In reality, the system was severely under-funded from the

beginning and has struggled for survival ever since. In the past 30 years, State Fire Training has endured major budget and staff reductions, increases in state mandated responsibilities, along with significant culture and identity challenges when it merged with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. When I ask fire officials around the state; "Is our training system of value and salvageable? The answer is always an emphatic yes!



My career in both law enforcement and the fire service gives me the unique opportunity and vantage point to objectively evaluate and compare the differences and successes of the law enforcement training system and the fire service training system. I strongly believe that the state fire training system is not only salvageable, but can return to the leadership role it once enjoyed 30 years ago. I'm gratified that so many members of the fire

service feel as I do. It is from this shared understanding that we have embarked on a quest to resolve the issues and problems that have plagued our training system for so long.

This is not the first strategic plan for State Fire Training in the past three decades. But, what will make this plan different, from the plans that came before it, is my personal commitment to see the immediate and mid-range plans implemented; and long range plans developed and funded appropriately. Many of the ideas discussed in this document have already germinated into thoughtful consideration; and some, to the extent possible, are being acted upon. But, for this plan to work effectively, it will take the commitment and dedication of every member of the fire service community pulling together as a collaborative body.

I appreciate your interest and participation in this strategic plan. I believe that we have an opportunity and a commitment to make California safe from natural and human-made emergencies by providing the highest level of training possible. For me, that commitment started with my first day in the service of public safety and continues as I serve as the State Fire Marshal and Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Grijalva".

Ruben Grijalva, Director and State Fire Marshal,
Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

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INTRODUCTION

This is not the first attempt to create a plan for the training and education for fire protection in California; the first one was during the 1930's and various individuals and groups created plans in the intervening years. Most of these plans arose from a need to update curricula or programs as conditions changed. Since the late 1980's, major shifts have taken place in American society that changed the paradigm for training and education in a way no one could have anticipated. Now individuals have access to communications and information at their fingertips, which opens up enormous possibilities for training and education never before considered.

The current State Fire Training model dates back to 1971. This model provided quality guidance for State Fire Training for a long time. Somewhere along the way that model became obsolete. Eventually that obsolescence led to system-wide failure.



Engine 4, a 1948 White/Van Pelt, during a pump test. (Santa Clara County F.D.)

Many other states' fire service training program moved forward while California's languished. Instead of being a leader in fire service training, now California trails most other states. Private industry recognizes the powerful shifts occurring in our society and move quickly to take advantage of them. Failure to recognize when a paradigm shifts and that the old business model has become obsolete-- leads to failure.

Where and when the paradigm shift occurred is not important; the fact is that it did and that the System needs a new model is obvious. We do know that fire service professionals today, both career and

volunteer, have very different expectations of the education methodology; the cultural milieu from which they emerged is starkly different from previous generations; and their expectations about their fire service careers are not the same. The entry-level fire fighter today grew up with a computer in the home and used one for school. Individual sources of communication, such as iPod and cellular phones are commonplace. Many of them have their own web sites or "My Space" blogs. They change fire departments at will for better pay, locations closer to home, exciting opportunities, or a chance to advance in their careers.

This Strategic Plan is an attempt to identify, define and describe that model and then to breathe new life into it so that the California State Fire Training System is once again so vigorous and robust that fire fighters will want to associate with it and participate in it with enthusiasm.

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Development of the Plan

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) assisted in the development of this plan and provided staff to assist with the preparation of the document. However, the plan is for the whole fire service community and a collaboration of stakeholders has been involved in its development from the very foundation. The stakeholders come from the local, state, and federal fire service in California as well as career and volunteer fire fighters, fire chiefs, organized labor, fire service training officers and community colleges.

OSFM obtained input from stakeholders at a Special Summit on State Fire Training convened in July 2006. In addition, both draft and published documents were surveyed and provided guidance to the strategic plans development. As the planning process continued, the Statewide Training and Education Advisory committee became the focus for obtaining stakeholders' input into the plan. The Acknowledgements page lists the members of Strategic Planning Team, Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee, the State Fire Training Staff, and the participants at the Special Summit.

Organizational Assessment

The State Fire Training Division (SFT) has its strengths and weaknesses. For years, California was a leader in fire service training; it developed certification; the stakeholders supported the system and helped develop curriculum; the staff, while quite small, was highly motivated; the basis of the system focused on fire fighting; and there was a solid foundation in place to build upon.

Over the years, however, the system has not maintained pace with the rest of the country; instructors have to use outdated teaching materials; in that the materials are outdated, the testing process becomes suspect; there are no requirements for participation; no required adherence to standards; and little money for the system to keep pace, let alone respond to technological changes in the delivery system or to keep pace with the growing demand for specialized training.

An internal needs analysis identified specific areas of improvement and suggests a systemic change is long over due. These areas include:

- Quality Control – There is a lack of accountability in the field and SFT does not have the staff to monitor instructors and training programs state wide.

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- Data Management – students, instructors and classes are in data software that was not designed to hold the volume of information that SFT collects.
- Outdated Curriculum – The volume of courses offered through SFT is difficult to update and maintain as the information in each program changes
- Certification – Security of certification exams is consistently breached. Current certification is not competency based.
- Continuing Education – There is no requirement for fire fighters, fire officers, chief officers, and instructors to maintain their skill and knowledge through a comprehensive continuing education program.
- Professional Development – There is an increased demand and expectation for professional development training to meet the challenges of today.
- Lack of Innovation – The SFT system is unresponsive to change and does not utilize technology to its fullest advantage. Many SFT business processes can and should be automated.
- Understaffing – The inability for SFT to maintain a responsive level of staffing, at a time when there are more people who rely on the system, limits SFT's ability for curriculum development, field review, research and development of new programs.

There are external forces and elements also at work, which both threaten the system with eventual collapse and provide opportunities for great success. California is a big state both geographically and demographically. This fact makes it very difficult to develop consensus about the direction that the state should be taking in state fire training. At the same time, there are national initiatives that threaten the California program but also show the way to take advantage of what others have done.

The fire service in California is going through a groundswell of change as much of the corporate knowledge retires; nevertheless, this also provides an opportunity for new thinking and new approaches to training. Federal programs, particularly in terrorism, threaten to dislodge California from its premier position as the leader in incident management. Simultaneously, the fire service nationally is looking to California for its leadership in training in this very arena of terrorism and incident management.

This list goes on, for every threat to the training system, there is also an opportunity to do things differently in the future. Through the generous participation of the stakeholders in developing this plan, they have envisioned a future that is much brighter and full of possibilities.

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VISION

To develop and implement a premier, all-risk, statewide emergency training and higher education system: From the entry level through journey, supervisory, management, and executive levels that includes and credits self-development and experience; and is in collaboration with all fire service organizations and stakeholders.

MISSION

The Office of the State Fire Marshal has the statutory authority to be the lead agency for fire service training and education in California (see Appendix C). “The mission of the State Fire Marshal is to protect life and property through the development and application of fire prevention engineering, education, and enforcement.”

VALUES

As a division within the State Fire Marshal’s Office the State Fire Training staff is “committed to providing the highest level of quality training and

education to the California fire service community.”

The staff working within State Fire Training identified the following values and has adopted them as their guiding principles:

- Professionalism - Commitment to quality and pride in our work
- Ethical – To do the right thing!
- Responsible – Willing to respond and to be accountable
- Considerate – To show caring, understanding and respect for others
- Dedicated – A passionate belief in the mission of State Fire Training



With fewer fires every year, fire control classes keeps fire fighters skills sharp. (R. Slaughter)

2005 Training Statistics

☀ 1,039 CFSTES classes	= 17,155 students
☀ 1,070 FSTEP classes	= 22,017 students
☀ 2,109 Total classes	= 39,172 students

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

There are an estimated 100 different agencies, organizations and special interests who are stakeholders to the mission and vision of the SFT. All segments of the fire service have an interest in training. In accordance with statute, the State Fire Marshal will oversee, direct, and manage the California Fire Service Training and Education Program. The guiding principles are the initial points of agreement between all of the stakeholders essential for the planning process. These include:

- The State Fire Marshal will be the final appeal for disputes involving training under the OSFM's jurisdiction.
- In accordance with statute, the State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) will provide policy guidance recommendations to the State Fire Marshal
- The Office of Administrative Law will vet and approve training and education regulations recommended by the SBFS
- The Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee (STEAC) will conduct final review of curricula and be the clearinghouse in all matters of training and education
- Delivery of training will be by the appropriate and most cost effective source under the general direction of the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM). Individual certification ultimately resides in the OSFM:
- Joint Apprenticeship Program is responsible for developing career fire fighter vocational training programs
- State Fire Marshal is responsible for developing professional training and education programs
- Office of Emergency Services is responsible for developing technical rescue, hazardous materials, and disaster training programs
- Emergency Medical Services Authority and local medical authority is responsible for developing paramedic, emergency medical technician, and first responder medical training programs

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- Accredited Regional and Local Academies, approved colleges and universities, agencies, departments, non-profits and private providers are responsible to deliver appropriate training and education within these established programs following OSFM policies
- Training will be available for all fire fighters and fire service disciplines within California
- The certification program will be mandatory for career and volunteer fire fighters in California.
- Instructors in any certified training for fire fighters in California will be registered with the OSFM; if academic credit is issued, the instructor should be qualified by the Community College System or State University System
- Vocational training is the application of skills and abilities
- Educational training is the comprehension, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of knowledge
- Continuing education will be a requirement to maintain certification and instructor registry
- Training and educational curricula includes best practices as established by law or described by nationally recognized groups
- Within the constraints of the standards, instructors will have freedom to choose texts, training materials, and delivery methods consistent with the environment, student population and sponsoring organization, institution, or agency
- Instructors will abide by a code of ethics as part of the instructor registry system
- The International Fire Service Accreditation Commission, which evaluates the effectiveness of the program's policies, procedure, curricula, and finances will accredit the California Fire Service Training Program

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GOALS & ACTION ITEMS

To actualize this vision five goals: quality assurance, adopting a national professional development model, capstone testing, automated business processes & training delivery systems, and the integration of public safety training & education have been identified. The goals are provided in detail below and include action items associated with the success for each goal.

The Immediate Action Items cover the period from adoption of the plan through the first three to seven years. The Mid-Range Action Items cover the next four to nine-year period of the plan. The Long-Range Action Items cover the remaining year ten and beyond of the plan and includes all the initiatives and the ongoing review process. The intent is to implement these goals, using these action items, concurrently.

I. Quality Assurance

Ensure the highest levels of service and quality. Incorporate an innovative research and development plan that keeps pace with technology through the next generation of all-risk emergency services. Implement an oversight program that ensures the qualifications, currency, and accountability of all instructors and curriculum. This effort shall also include improved course material, course delivery and instructor registration.

Instructors are the ambassadors and representatives of the SFT program; as such, they need to possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to deliver the training in a contemporary, challenging, and credible manner. SFT will achieve quality instruction by enforcing the instructor code of ethics and instructor qualification requirements. By having SFT staff in the field instructors will realize they have support from the training system they represent.

Institutions, agencies, and organizations that sponsor SFT programs should ardently enforce the policies of the program with respect to using appropriate curricula, choosing quality instructors and sponsoring their ongoing development, evaluating and testing students, providing modern training facilities, equipment, and supplies that support learning. Here again, the SFT needs to have the staffing in order to audit and oversee these activities.

Students that attend training should encounter a program that challenges them to grow and learn; a program that motivates them to approach the learning experience with enthusiasm and return for more of the same. Students should expect an elevated

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ethical standard that favors those who are willing to work for their grades and certifications. This will reestablish value and pride in their personal accomplishments.

Immediate Action Items for Quality Assurance

A. Implement an oversight program that ensures the qualifications, currency, and accountability of all instructors.

- Establish an oversight program to monitor instructors, courses, and delivery sites: develop procedures; identify geographical work areas; and develop employee specifications.
- Hire eight appropriate level training specialists, one for each work area. Train the Deputies to perform the oversight tasks. As they come “on-line”, have them conduct “pilot” evaluations, with appropriate feedback.
- Ongoing monitoring starts to show results and increases confidence in the quality of the program.
- Potential Funding: One possible source is an instructor registry fee of \$500 paid every five years to maintain instructor registry for each course.

B. Improve course materials and course delivery.

- STEAC should determine the sequence and applicable tracks. Start with the chief officer certification courses and adopt commercially available text materials that come with proper instructor support. This is the block of courses in the greatest need of updating. STEAC will accomplish this task.
- Update the certification for fire prevention courses and adopt commercially available text materials that come with proper instructor support. With the adoption of the International Codes, this is the obvious next candidate. STEAC, with support from stakeholders, will accomplish this task.
- Update the fire officer certification courses and adopt commercially available text materials that come with proper instructor support. By this time, this material will be in need of updating. STEAC, with support from stakeholders, will accomplish this task.
- Update the driver/operator certification courses and adopt commercially available text materials that come with proper instructor support. STEAC, with support from stakeholders, will accomplish this task.
- Update the Fire fighter I and II courses and adopt commercially available text materials that come with proper instructor support. STEAC, with support from stakeholders, will accomplish this task.

C. Explore the instructor qualification and credentialing process.

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- Develop the guidelines for a quinquennial instructor registration at the annual training officer's symposium.
- With chief officer program instructors as the participants, conduct a pilot program for the quinquennial instructor registration at the annual training officer's symposium. Limit the number to thirty instructors.
- Based on the success of pilot programs, start the quinquennial instructor registration at the annual training officer's symposium for chief officer instructors. Limit the number to 150 instructors.
- Continue the quinquennial instructor registration at the annual training officer's symposium for fire prevention instructors.
- Continue the quinquennial instructor registration at the annual training officer's symposium for all instructors. Program is in continuous service. There may be a need for additional venues to accommodate all the instructors.

Mid-Range Action Items for Quality Assurance

Ensure that there is a process of consistent and ongoing curriculum development manipulative training and academic education. Implement a system, using the living document format, to maintain curriculum. The curriculum should instill verifiable professional standards. List all fire service courses. Recognize California fire service specialized curriculum training needs, such as in the prevention arena. Categorize the curricula that meet national standards. Formulate student-learning outcomes and approve curricula.

Conduct an accreditation performance audit using the International Fire Service Accreditation Commission (IFSAC). This action will provide the gap analysis necessary to correct shortcomings and ensure that the program stays on track for success.

- Conduct the accreditation performance audit and receive the accreditation report.
- Based on the report findings, prepare an action plan (update of the Strategic Plan) to address the recommendations from the report. Seek administrative and legislative support for the plan as needed.
- Adjust the program as much as possible to meet the recommendations.
- Conduct the second accreditation performance audit and receive the accreditation report.
- Prepare for accreditation review on a quinquennial basis
- Ensure the highest levels of service and quality assurance by establishing a Fire Service Training and Research Center at the California Public Safety

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Institute. Charge the center with responsibility to keep pace with technological and social change through the next generation of all risk emergency services.

The same technological advances that affect training delivery will also have an impact on the situations that fire fighters encounter in the delivery of services. We can only speculate about the advances that will occur in fire prevention practices, fire response, emergency medical services, disaster response, and a host of other situations. Constant vigilance will be the watchword as we move into the future.

Long-Range Action Items for Quality Assurance

In conjunction with the audit program, constant review of the curriculum, teaching and especially the testing process is necessary to maintain program credibility.

II Adopt the National Professional Development Model

California will participate in the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) National Model of fire service training and education. The International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Fire Academy, and the National Fire Protection Association all promote and support the FESHE National Model. The National Model contains these features:

- An integrated, competency-based system of fire and emergency services professional development; and
- An integrated system of higher education from a two year Associate degree to Doctoral degrees.

This results in a well-trained and academically educated fire and emergency services. There will be partnerships with other states and national recognition of educational achievement and training certification. State training will form a partnership with the national program. Accreditation will follow national standards. There will be elements of national recognition and reciprocity. California will continue to be a leader in the innovation and development of standards, curricula, and new techniques particularly in those aspects of training unique to California.

Immediate Action Items for National Professional Development Model

- Formally initiate the process of adopting the National Model with Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE). Establish a task group,

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under OSFM, to do the work necessary. Evaluate the model relative to the legal and situational needs unique to the California Fire Service. Identify those components that are appropriate to add to the model to meet those unique needs. Start to develop partnerships with those states that have a similar fire service circumstances as California.

- Formally adopt the FESHE National Model in California amended to include the unique components previously identified. Establish a timetable and priorities for implementation of the model and adoption of the model by the education and training providers. Continue to develop partnerships with other states and internationally, both to enhance our experience and to pass on the lessons we learn as we adopt the model.
- Based on the timetable and identified priorities complete at least two pilot projects, one in education and one in training, to demonstrate the effectiveness of the model; validate the model for the fire service training community; and market the model to the California Fire Service.
- Commence broad based implementation of the model as it gains acceptance. Commence the accreditation process.
- Continue implementation of the model at various training venues and in various existing programs. Based on the California experience, play an ever increasingly active role in the refinement of the national model.

Mid-Range Action Items for National Professional Development Model

- Based on the California experience, SFT should play an increasingly active role in the refinement of the national model. Continue to reach out nationally, internationally to share the California experience, and to enhance the quality of the model. Adjust with changes to the model and adjust the model to meet changing conditions. This is an ongoing task.

Long-Range Action Items for National Professional Development Model

- Work closely with legislative bodies to bring California's codes and ordinances as much in line with nationally recognized models as possible. This will help reduce the disconnect between California practice and the national model.

III Utilize Capstone Testing

Capstone testing is testing done upon the completion of an entire certification series. The current system of testing for each course in the certification process is subject to abuse, requires the use of multiple choice tests and leads to certification given for

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passing a series of courses and not a demonstration for proficiency in the subject. Capstone testing requires comprehensive testing upon the completion of all pre-requisite training and application by the candidate for certification. Candidates could attend a capstone course to prepare for the test. The tests themselves would consist of an appropriate combination of written (essay, fill-in and multiple choice) questions, oral presentations, and simulations. This process would create value for the certification that the current system lacks.

Immediate Action Items for Capstone Testing

Level Testing is a concept that requires comprehensive “capstone” testing upon the completion of all pre-requisite training and application by the candidate for certification. While there is some work involved in putting this process together, it will act to upgrade the entire training system in a profound way. Consequently, implementation should proceed as quickly as possible. The following is an example sequence. STEAC should be utilized to establish a sequence appropriate to the needs for this type of testing process.

- Identify, define, and develop the testing process for one of the certification series. Since Fire fighter I is the first in the series and this process is a departure from the current process it seems logical that Fire fighter I could be the first.
- Develop a pilot process to test the concept and identify needed corrections. Upon completion of the pilot correct the process and put it into general practice for the FF-I certification.
- Identify, define, and develop the process for the second series, FF-II and Fire Prevention. Candidates for testing could attend a capstone course to prepare for the test. Regional academies would provide the testing sites. The tests themselves would consist of an appropriate combination of written (essay, fill-in and multiple choice) questions, oral presentations, and simulations.
- Based on previous experience, develop testing process for Driver/Operator and Training Officer certification.
- Develop testing process for Fire Officer and Fire Mechanics certification

Mid-Range Action Items for Capstone Testing

- Identify, define, and develop the process for the fifth series, Chief Officer. At this level, the capstone course to prepare for the testing process will be most important. This level test should incorporate all the valuable experiences gained so far in the development of this process.
- Reevaluate and update the testing process for the FF-I certification.

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- Reevaluate and update the testing process for the FF-II and Fire Prevention certification.
- Reevaluate and update the testing process for the Driver/Operator and Training Officer certification.
- Reevaluate and update the testing process for the for Fire Officer and Fire Mechanics certification.
- Reevaluate and update the testing process for the Chief Officer certification.
- Reevaluation, updating of each testing process in turn, in keeping with national standards and unique California requirements, is an ongoing function.

Long-Range Action Items for Capstone Testing

By this time, level testing is the common practice. SFT needs to pay attention to the testing itself to ensure that the tests are credible and linked to performance.

IV Automate State Fire Training Business Processes & Training Delivery

Just as the fire service adopted the computer aided dispatch systems in the last two decades, now it will adopt the computer aided training and education system. This delivery system will at least have the following multiple functions:

- Delivery of appropriate distance learning training and education material
- Tracking of and access to completed training and certification for individuals, training officers and department leadership
- Tracking of a universally accepted Incident Qualifications System for all components of the fire protection system
- Testing processes
- Scheduling of training and education courses and programs
- Qualifications and registry of instructors

The system design should incorporate technology that allows it to feed information into the popular training records programs used in the fire service. Every fire fighter should have access to web based information concerning the overall SFT as well as specific course offering dates and locations. Students should have access to their individual training records. These records should be readily downloadable to most commonly used fire-service training record programs. Students should be able to challenge their record through the web and receive email responses.

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Registered instructors should have access to curriculum information, instructor guides, training support materials, testing materials and certificates for the courses they teach. Instructor guides should have a capability to allow instructors to add notes in a manner similar to an on-line chat room, so that other instructors can see what the instructor community is saying about a course.

During the quinquennial curriculum rewrites, these notes would provide the basis for course updates and modifications. Recognized training sites should have access to testing materials and certificates for the courses they offer.

The OSFM will safeguard certificates through a numbering and accounting system. A student identification number will replace the current use of social security numbers. Placing responsibility for certificates with the training site and instructor will speed up the issuing of certificates and reduce mailing costs. Restricted access sites on the web site (participant, instructor and training sites) should include a logging system that identifies the user each time they access the site.

SFT will identify and establish methods to incorporate modern technology into training and educational delivery with emphasis on learning outcomes. SFT will continue to explore technology based instructional methodologies. SFT will continuously identify courses appropriate for the use of computer technology. SFT will establish an approval process for selecting the methodology for delivering technology-based courses.

Immediate Action Items for Automated Processes & Delivery

The OSFM data management system will use the most advanced reliable technology applicable to the competing needs for openness and security.

- OSFM investigate data management systems available that contain the necessary built-in safeguards that allow access to web based information as appropriate to the fire service community consistent with the expectations outlined above. STEAC should establish the specific parameters for the software. Information Technology (IT) will provide the personnel and resources to accomplish the task.
- OSFM purchase and/or develop the required software to meet the needs of the whole fire service for training and education. A subcommittee of STEAC should work closely with IT throughout the development process.
- Beta test the software and make appropriate fixes. Beta testing should include volunteer as well as career-staffed departments in every size category from

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very small to metropolitan. Through the auspices of STEAC, all stakeholders should be able to access, review and comment on the development.

- Upon completion of Beta testing, provide training to departments in system use and launch the system. Commence transferring data from existing paper and computer-based systems to ensure continuity of records.
- The system is operating and the fire service community is adopting it for general use. The OSFM completed transferring all existing system data from paper record and the old system. At the end of year 5, shut off the old systems.

Throughout the development process, there will be a need for one Deputy State Fire Marshal to work with IT in the development process to ensure that design is consistent with fire service expectations. Initially, year one, IT should assign one system designer to work with OSFM on development. In years two and three, there may be a need for three or four software developers.

There will be a need for one technician to maintain the system server at headquarters. The IT trouble desk would need funding, probably equivalent to one-half of a technical to handle individual requests. We anticipate that each department and individual fire fighter would maintain his or her own requisite hardware and software.

Mid-Range Action Items for Automated Processes & Delivery

Maintain the processes used to identify modern technology into training and educational delivery with emphasis on learning outcomes. Identify and explore technology based instructional methodologies. Identify courses appropriate for the use of the technology. Establish an approval process for selecting the methodology for delivering technology-based courses.

Long-Range Action Items for Automated Processes & Delivery

Technology will continue to advance at an ever-accelerating pace. The challenge will be two fold:

- Staying current as technology changes rapidly; and
- Maintaining systems that are familiar, consistent, and deliver real training and education.

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V Integrate Public Safety Training

Create a unified system that integrates all public safety training and education stakeholders toward a common mission. The crown jewel of this initiative is the envisioned all risk California Public Safety Institute (a California equivalent of the federal National Emergency Training Center). Although the Institute is an important visionary concept, it may not be the first objective to achieve. The following state agencies would sponsor this institute; Office of Homeland Security, Office of Emergency Services, Office of the State Fire Marshal, Emergency Medical Services Authority and Peace Officer Standard Training. This would be the state of the art premier facility that would foster emergency management research and development, as well as training and education.

The Institute would include the functions of advancing new technologies, reviewing and analyzing methods, leadership development, strategic and critical thinking, and preparing case studies. The long range goal would be to build the institute into a recognized four-year type college/university campus. The Institute would provide or support baccalaureate, master, and doctoral level education.

Immediate Action Items for Public Safety Training

Develop relationships with the key cooperators in the all risk California Public Safety Institute. While it is uncertain whether others wish to proceed with this initiative, it will probably be attractive to enough of them to develop a base. During this same period work closely with the cooperator groups on training initiatives and curriculum that have a common basis, such as terrorism, the Incident Command System and disaster response and create core courses populated by all disciplines represented in the Public Safety Institute.

- With the support of the key cooperators develop a funding goal and general site location for the facility. With that funding goal in mind explore and develop potential funding sources with emphasis on interagency cooperation and joint state/federal funding.
- Purchase the facility site and develop the facility plans.
- Commence construction or in the case of an already existing facility, the reconstruction and remodeling.
- Complete construction and open the facility for operation.

Mid-Range Action Items for Public Safety Training

As the initiative gain success, continue to enhance the facility and the offerings. Establish honorary teaching chairs in the areas of specialty to raise the level of

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credibility of the Institute. Establish an alumni association and develop an Institute endowment fund through this group. Establish a doctoral program to develop faculty and enhance the professional standing of emergency service practitioners.

Long-Range Action Items for Public Safety Training

Continue the process of accreditation audits by IFSAC. Utilize those findings to continually improve the State Fire Training program.

METHODOLOGY

This section identifies “how we get there from here.” The following methodologies provide the foundation for achieving success of this vision and the succeeding goals:

Identify and Secure a Stable Funding Source

Critical to the success of the Strategic Plan is in the identification of a stable funding source. SFT will continue to employ user fees along with expenditures for student registration and materials costs. However, the bulk of training for public sector fire fighters and most of the research and development of training and education must come from an outside and stable funding source. This stable funding source will ensure top-quality course materials and promote best use of delivery systems. The following ideas have been presented as a potential source of stable funding:

- One funding source that seems successful in other states is a surcharge on property insurance.
- Another less dependable source is the fines and forfeitures associated with fire law violations.
- The third source to examine is a surcharge on health insurance premiums to pay for all risk and emergency medical service training.
- While special funds, such as the insurance surcharge, are less subject to the vagaries of the economy than the state’s general fund, the general fund must also participate in the funding.

Focus of the Business Model

The business model used for the State Fire Training program (SFT) will focus on the following issues: customer service, stakeholder involvement, quality control, ongoing strategic planning, performance audits and gap analysis, standards development, and continuing education are all critical to the success of this plan.

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All of the business processes of the SFT demand review with the focus on reducing steps in paperwork processes, enhancing staff proficiency, clarifying roles of the participants, and reducing costs. This focus will provide the framework for ongoing success as the program moves into the twenty-first century.

Customer Service

Ongoing support of the fire service community is essential to the success of the SFT. The fire service community needs to believe that the focus of the program is on their needs. Given that the current staff is only eight people, only outrageously good customer service can achieve this goal. Due to this small staff size, departure of even one member has significant consequences. Staff needs greater authority to commit and take action on issues as they arise. Delegating as deeply as possible will help, but only a larger staff can really help. Other staffs contribute members to the Training Staff when they can. Staff needs training and cross training to enhance its ability to take action without passing requests through a bureaucratic maze. Cross training will also enhance institutional memory.

One stop shopping is an overused phrase, but it applies appropriately to this program. Streamlining program processes to eliminate steps, place authority at the lowest level possible and speed results to students, instructors, sponsors, and organizations should be an ongoing top priority. This will be difficult to achieve, but the leadership must take this on with missionary zeal in order for change to occur.

Broad Stakeholder Involvement

SFT cuts across all aspects of the fire service in California. For the program to have credibility, all stakeholder groups need to have a seat at the table for policy decisions concerning the program. This involvement is achieved, in part, through Advisory Boards and Committees such as; the State Board of Fire Services and the Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee. In these forums all fire-related organizations and special interest groups can have their voices heard in a consensus process. These boards and committees need to reflect the demographics of the fire service and include a broad mix of ages, ethnicities, ranks, and gender. Terms should be long enough to make members productive, but short enough to ensure that new perspectives are constantly voiced and heard.

Attention to Strategic and Tactical Planning

Change in contemporary society is at best chaotic and successful organizations need to be flexible enough to respond to opportunities as they occur, while simultaneously seeking out and divining the future. Only through a process of ongoing strategic and

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tactical planning will SFT be able to stay current. The last approved strategic plan was in 1971.

In the late 1960's, when the fire service leadership first contemplated SFT, who would have imagined the profound effect of emergency medical service, hazardous materials response, or technical rescue on the fire service? What the future holds is anyone's guess, but it is safe to say that there are opportunities on the horizon that will have a similarly profound effect. The program needs to be on the lookout for those opportunities and in the vanguard of creating them. With an ongoing strategic and tactical planning effort, the program can position itself in such a manner that it is constantly able to meet these challenges.

Regular and Valid Performance Audits and Gap Analysis

The International Fire Service Accreditation Commission, should be used to conduct an accreditation performance audit every five years (similar to that required for other institutions of higher learning). The Commission extends its support to organizations such as the SFT. The process serves a dual purpose:

- The expectation that SFT program must be worthy of the trust placed in it to provide high quality learning opportunities.
- The SFT program clearly demonstrates that it is about the critical business of continual self-improvement. Accreditation will assure participants and investors in the credibility of the program.

Staff Development

SFT has the authority, responsibility, and accountability for the delivery of a high quality training and education system. But, SFT also needs sufficient staffing and staff training to carry out its mission. This will greatly enhance the quality of the program. Increased staffing in curriculum development and field audits will send the message that this is a serious endeavor and worthy of support.

The OSFM staff supporting the program needs its own training and education program. This should commence with the hiring of new staff and continue in an ongoing basis until throughout employment. OSFM leadership must encourage staff to participate and/or observe the delivery of training at all levels so that they have first hand knowledge of the programs.

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In addition to their individual training tracks, staff should have the option to participate in the annual training officers meeting (Fresno), particularly the instructor registration and update program and other recognized regional, statewide and national programs. This could be integrated with CDF's overall training program. A career development plan can be an effective tool to help retain staff, as well indicate what future training possibilities exist for the rest of the fire service industry.



New fire fighters have to learn their craft before the seasoned firefighters retire! (R. Slaughter)

With adequate funding will come adequate staffing. With the implementation of this plan, staffing needs will vary over time as the needs for training and education shift and refocus in new areas. Certain aspects of technology may reduce the need for personnel in one arena and increase it in other arenas.

Open Financial Management

SFT needs adequate and reliable financial resources to support a robust and cost-effective program. A portion of the funding needs to be from the participants so that they have a financial as well as professional stake in the outcome of their efforts and the program.

OSFM, being a public agency charged with SFT responsibility, should manage the funds for the program and distribute them to cooperating agencies based on policy adopted by the SBFS. There is a need to establish statutory restrictions on the administrative charge that supporting state agencies can levy on SFT program funds. This will ensure that the public trust for the funds receives appropriate safeguarding.

A well-designed program with clearly defined roles for all participants will also be a financially efficient program. Cost effectiveness should be continuously evaluated and one of the measures for establishing new programs. It should also be a focus of the quinquennial audit as well as internal audits as required by statute and policy.

Planned Marketing

The SFT training program will gain esteem and credibility in the marketplace with the actualization of this strategic plan. A credible program held in high esteem by the California fire service will compel competing efforts to join into the plan because of its strength and acceptance.

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The broad range of the marketing outreach will encompass all providers of training in the public, non-profit and private sectors. Certification of course curricula and delivery through peer assessment will ensure a level playing field and provide training through the most cost-effective delivery system.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Strategic Plan is a living document, under constant review and re-evaluation. The measures of performance for the training system will come from a number of different sources. Certainly, the completion of the initiatives envisioned in this plan will be part of that mix. The objective performance audits conducted by outside evaluators such as the International Fire Service Accreditation Commission (IFSAC) will be another measure of performance. The stakeholders through their respective representatives on the State Board of Fire Services and the Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee will ensure that the plan works as envisioned. The State Fire Training Staff will constantly monitor the performance of the plan as it influences their own performance. Most importantly, we should all look for significant improvements in the delivery of training to firefighters and the resultant improvement in their performance.

Internal Performance Reports

- Annual reports - The STEAC in conjunction with SFT will report annually on the progress towards implementation of the action items of the Strategic Plan to the State Fire Marshal and the State Board of Fire Services.
- Annual Strategic Plan Revision - The Strategic Plan calls for annual revision. This requirement will ensure that the plan is lively and fresh, constantly adjusted and corrected to meet the current and future needs of the fire service in California.
- To Director and Control Agencies - The State Fire Marshal will forward the annual report Developed by STEAC and the SBFS to the Director of CDF.
- The Department will include the Strategic Plan in its annual budget report to the Department of Finance and will include in any Budget Change Proposals.

External Performance Reports

- Five year accreditation audit - The accreditation process envisioned in Mid Range initiative one, Review the First Five Years of the Plan, would stand as the most reliable and confidence inspiring measurement of performance of the program. IFSAC is widely esteemed for its independence, thoroughness, and credibility. Accreditation by IFSAC will add significant prestige to the State Fire Training Program.

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- To stakeholders - The Statewide Training and Education Committee, STEAC, is the stakeholder representative to the OSFM. In this capacity, its charge is, “To serve as a policy review committee for the State Fire Marshal and provide final review of all State Fire Training course curricula”. Part of this role has been to be an integral part of the entire strategic planning process. Through its periodic meetings, committee and sub committee assignments to carry out the plan and the individual interest of its member organizations it will safeguard and balance the competing interests of the stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

State Fire Training has ambitious plans and seemingly insurmountable issues to deal with. But, for SFT to move forward as the lead training agency for the California Fire Service and emerge as a national leader it must come to terms with the changing social and technological changes surrounding it. This plan is dependent on one very critical factor—funding! Without a stable and reliable funding source, increases in staff, advances in technology, and participation in the national training models simply will not happen. But there is hope! New leadership and management have made this plan their personal commitment. Members of the fire service industry have also renewed their support to the State Fire Training System. It is in this collective spirit that this plan is presented.

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APPENDIX A - Document Control

Document Number	Date	Status
CFST Strategic Plan	June 6, 2006	Format Review and Approval
CFST Strategic Plan 1*	August 8, 2006	Executive Review #1
CFST Strategic Plan 1.1**	August 13, 2006	Major Edits
CFST Strategic Plan 1.2***	August 14, 2006	Staff and STEAC review
CFST Strategic Plan 2.0****	September 28, 2006	Planning Team and Contributor
CFST Strategic Plan		

* Includes the work from the Special Summit of State Fire Training in Riverside July 2006.

** Executive Review by Kate Dargan, Assistant State Fire Marshal

*** Edited for spelling and punctuation by John Malmquist

**** Includes edit comments from SFT Staff and STEAC received by September 20, 2006

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APPENDIX B - Policy Guidance

Excerpted from the California Health and Safety Code

Article 1. General

13100. (a) The Office of the State Fire Marshal is hereby created in the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The Office of the State Fire Marshal shall be administered by the State Fire Marshal, who shall be a Chief Deputy Director of Forestry and Fire Protection in accordance with paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 702 of the Public Resources Code and appointed pursuant to Section 13101 of this code.

(b) The Office of the State Fire Marshal and the State Fire Marshal in the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection succeed to, and are vested with, all of the powers, duties, responsibilities, and jurisdiction of the former Office of the State Fire Marshal and the former State Fire Marshal, as the case may be, in the State and Consumer Services Agency.

(c) Wherever any reference is made in any law to the former Office of the State Fire Marshal or to the former State Fire Marshal in the State and Consumer Services Agency pertaining to a power, duty, responsibility, or jurisdiction transferred to, and vested in, the Office of the State Fire Marshal or the State Fire Marshal in the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the reference shall be deemed to be a reference to, and to mean, the Office of the State Fire Marshal or the State Fire Marshal in the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, as the case may be.

13100.1. The functions of the office shall be to foster, promote and develop ways and means of protecting life and property against fire and panic.

13105.2. (a) The State Fire Marshal shall establish and operate a statewide hazardous materials training facility to be located at the Del Valle Firefighting Facility of the County of Los Angeles.

(b) Subdivision (a) shall be operative in any fiscal year only to the extent that funds are appropriated in the annual Budget Act or donated by private donors, contributed by local agencies, or provided by other funding sources for the purpose of subdivision (a). Donations by private donors, local agencies, or other sources may be in the form of money, in-kind services, or equipment. All monetary contributions received pursuant to this subdivision shall be deposited into a special deposit fund account to carry out the requirements of subdivision (a).

13105.5. The State Fire Marshal shall establish or cause to be established a program of fire prevention training for fire prevention inspectors employed by local fire protection agencies. The training program shall be conducted on a regional basis located near such agencies which employ or contract with such inspectors.

13107. (a) The State Fire Marshal shall investigate every explosion or fire occurring in any state institution, state-owned building, or any building which is determined, pursuant to regulations adopted by the State Fire Marshal, to be state occupied, and every explosion or fire occurring in those areas of the state not under the jurisdiction of a legally organized fire department or fire protection district or other public entity, including, but not limited to, the state, which provides fire protection in which there is suspicion that the crime of arson or attempted arson has been committed.

(b) Upon request of the chief fire official of a legally organized fire department or fire protection district, or the governing body thereof, or upon request of the chief of a police department or the sheriff regarding a fire which occurs in an area where there is no operating arson investigation unit, the State Fire Marshal shall, within the limitation of resources and manpower established for those purposes, investigate any explosion or fire occurring within the jurisdiction of the requesting official in which there is suspicion that the crime of arson or attempted arson has been committed.

(c) The State Fire Marshal shall cooperate in the establishment of a program for training fire department personnel in arson investigation and detection.

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Article 2. The State Board of Fire Services

13140. There is hereby created in the Office of the State Fire Marshal a State Board of Fire Services which shall consist of 18 members. The State Board of Fire Services succeeds to all of the powers, duties, and responsibilities of the State Fire Advisory Board, which is hereby abolished. Whenever the term "State Fire Advisory Board" appears in any other law, it means the State Board of Fire Services.

13140.5. The board shall be composed of the following voting members: the State Fire Marshal, the Chief Deputy Director of the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection who is not the State Fire Marshal, the Director of the Office of Emergency Services, the Chairperson of the California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Program, one representative of the insurance industry, one volunteer firefighter, three fire chiefs, five fire service labor representatives, one representative from city government, one representative from a fire district, and one representative from county government. The following members shall be appointed by the Governor: one representative of the insurance industry, one volunteer firefighter, three fire chiefs, five fire service labor representatives, one representative from city government, one representative from a fire district, and one representative from county government. Each member appointed shall be a resident of this state. The volunteer firefighter shall be selected from a list of names submitted by the California State Firefighters Association. One fire chief shall be selected from a list of names submitted by the California Fire Chiefs' Association; one fire chief shall be selected from a list of names submitted by the Fire Districts Association of California; and one fire chief shall be selected from a list of names submitted by the California Metropolitan Fire Chiefs. One fire service labor representative shall be selected from a list of names submitted by the California Labor Federation; one fire service labor representative shall be selected from a list of names submitted by the California Professional Firefighters; one fire service labor representative shall be selected from a list of names submitted by the International Association of Fire Fighters; one fire service labor representative shall be selected from a list of names submitted by the California Department of Forestry Firefighters; and one fire service labor representative shall be selected from a list of names submitted by the California State Firefighters Association. The city government representative shall be selected from elected or appointed city chief administrative officers or elected city mayors or council members. The fire district representative shall be selected from elected or appointed directors of fire districts. The county government representative shall be selected from elected or appointed county chief administrative officers or elected county supervisors. The appointed members shall be appointed for a term of four years. Any member chosen by the Governor to fill a vacancy created other than by expiration of a term shall be appointed for the unexpired term of the member he or she is to succeed.

13140.6. A quorum of the board shall consist of not less than nine members of the board. Proxy representation shall not be permitted.

13140.7. The State Fire Marshal shall act as chairman of the board and provide necessary staff services. A vice chairman shall be selected by majority vote of the members.

13141. The board shall meet at the call of the State Fire Marshal, or at the request of any two members, but not less than annually, and shall receive no salary. Board members shall be paid actual and necessary expenses related to activities of the board. Meetings of the board shall be announced in writing to all members at least 15 days in advance of the meeting date.

13142. The board, shall from time to time make full and complete studies, recommendations, and reports to the Governor and the Legislature for the purpose of recommending establishment of minimum standards with respect to all of the following:

(a) Physical requirements, education and training of fire protection personnel appointed to positions in regularly organized fire service agencies in this state, who are to be engaged in fire protection, including, but not limited to, fire suppression, fire prevention, arson investigation, and other allied fields.

(b) Fire apparatus, equipment, hose, tools, and related items.

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(c) Basic minimum courses of training and education for fire protection personnel.

13144.5. The State Fire Marshal shall prepare and conduct voluntary regular training sessions devoted to the interpretation and application of the laws and rules and regulations in Title 19 and Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations relating to fire and panic safety. The training sessions shall include, but need not be limited to, interpretation of the regulations pertaining to community care facilities licensed pursuant to Section 1508, to residential care facilities for the elderly licensed pursuant to Section 1569.10, and to child day care facilities licensed pursuant to Section 1596.80, in order to coordinate a consistent interpretation and application of the regulations among local fire enforcement agencies.

Article 4. California Fire Service Training and Education Program

13155. This article shall be known and may be cited as the California Fire Service Training and Education Program Act.

13156. The Legislature finds and declares that the purposes of this article are as follows:

- (a) To reduce the costs in suffering and property loss resulting from fire through standardized fire training and education programs.
- (b) To provide professional fire service training and education programs to personnel in fire departments that rely extensively on volunteers.
- (c) To develop new methods and practices in the area of fire protection.
- (d) To disseminate information relative to fires, techniques of firefighters, and other related subjects to all interested agencies and individuals throughout the state.
- (e) To enhance the coordination of fire service training and education.
- (f) To develop a coordinated and standardized plan for the control of fires and the safety of firefighters where hazardous materials are involved.

13157. The California Fire Service Training and Education Program is hereby established in the office of the State Fire Marshal. The State Fire Marshal, with policy guidance and advice from the State Board of Fire Services, shall carry out the management of the California Fire Service Training and Education Program and shall have the authority to:

- (a) Promulgate and adopt rules and regulations necessary for implementation of the program.
- (b) Establish the courses of study and curriculum to be used in the program.
- (c) Establish prerequisites for the admission of personnel who attend courses offered in the program.
- (d) Establish and collect admission fees and other fees that may be necessary to be charged for seminars, conferences, and specialized training given, which shall not be deducted from state appropriations for the purposes of this program.
- (e) Collect such fees as may be established pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 13142.4. (13142.4 was removed from statute in the consolidation with CDF).

13158. The State Fire Marshal shall employ under civil service a program manager and staff as necessary to perform the functions for which the program has been established. All personnel of the State Fire Training Program with the Department of Education shall be eligible to transfer to appropriate positions in the California Fire Service Training and Education Program provided they meet the qualifications for those positions.

13159. The State Fire Marshal, with policy guidance and advice from the State Board of Fire Services, shall have the following responsibilities:

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- (a) To make fire service training and education programs, including training and education in the use of heavy rescue equipment, available on a voluntary basis to fire departments that rely extensively on volunteers.
 - (b) Cooperate with the State Board of Fire Services in the development of a minimum standards program for fire service personnel and fire service instructors.
 - (c) Assist and cooperate with State Board of Fire Services pursuant to Section 13142.4 (13142.4 was removed from statute in the consolidation with CDF).
 - (d) Verify that minimum curriculum requirements, facilities, and faculty standards for schools, seminars, or workshops operated by or for the state for the specific purpose of training fire service personnel are being met.
 - (e) Make or encourage studies of any aspect of fire service training and education.
 - (f) Determine the need for and recommend locations of regional training sites.
 - (g) Develop a model plan or system for use by fire departments for the control of fires and the safety of firefighters where hazardous materials are involved.
 - (h) Study the feasibility of establishing within the office of the State Fire Marshal, a depository of information on hazardous material characteristics for use by local fire departments and other entities that respond to emergencies.
- 13159.1. (a) The State Fire Marshal shall establish additional training standards that include the criteria for curriculum content recommended by the Emergency Response Training Advisory Committee established pursuant to Section 8588.10 of the Government Code, involving the responsibilities of first responders to terrorism incidents and to address the training needs of those identified as first responders.
- (b) Every paid and volunteer firefighter assigned to field duties in a state or local fire department or fire protection or firefighting agency may receive the appropriate training described in this section. Pertinent training previously completed by any jurisdiction's firefighters and meeting the training standards of this section may be submitted to the State Fire Marshal to assess its content and determine whether it meets the training requirements prescribed by the State Fire Marshal.
- 13159.4. The State Fire Marshal shall annually review, revise as necessary, and administer the California Fire Service Training program, shall establish priorities for the use of state and federal fire service training and education funds applicable to statewide programs, other than those funds administered by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and shall approve the expenditure of these funds in accordance with the established priorities. This section shall not restrict local entities from independently seeking and utilizing state and federal funds for local fire training and education needs.
- 13159.7. This article shall be known and may be cited as the California Fire and Arson Training Act.
- 13159.8. The State Fire Marshal, with policy guidance and advice from the State Board of Fire Services, shall:
- (a) Establish and validate recommended minimum standards for fire protection personnel and fire protection instructors at all career levels.
 - (b) Develop course curricula for arson, fire technology, and apprenticeship training for use in academies, colleges, and other educational institutions.
 - (c) Develop, validate, update, copyright, and maintain security over a complete series of promotional examinations based on the minimum standards established pursuant to subdivision (a).
 - (d) Have the authority to make the examinations developed pursuant to subdivision (c) available to any agency of the state, to any political subdivision within the state, or to any other testing organization, as he or she deems appropriate.

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(e) Establish any fees which are necessary to implement this section. However, the State Fire Marshal shall not establish or collect any fees for training classes provided by the State Fire Marshal to fire protection personnel relating to state laws and regulation which local fire services are authorized or required to enforce.

(f) Promote, sponsor, and administer the California Fire Academy System.

(g) Establish procedures for seeking, accepting, and administering gifts and grants for use in implementing the intents and purposes of the California Fire and Arson Training Act.

(h) The recommended minimum standards established pursuant to subdivision (a) shall not apply to any agency of the state or any agency of any political subdivision within the state unless that agency elects to be subject to these standards.

13159.9. The State Fire Marshal shall:

(a) Jointly, with the California Professional Firefighters, promote participation in, sponsor, and administer the California Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship Program as the preemployment recruitment, selection, and training system to be utilized for entry level firefighters.

(b) Establish advisory committees or panels, as necessary, to assist the State Fire Marshal in carrying out his or her function under this article.

13159.10. There is established in the State Treasury the California Fire and Arson Training Fund. All revenue collected pursuant to Section 13159.8 shall be paid into this fund and these moneys shall be available when appropriated by the Legislature for the office of the State Fire Marshal to carry out the provisions of this article.

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APPENDIX C - Letters of Support

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